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ABSTRACT

Between fall 1987 and 1992, Maui Community College's (MCC's) (Hawaii) enrollment increased by 40%, to 2,799 students. This growth was a result of increased student and community interest in higher education on all three islands in Maui County, as well as MCC's aggressive recruitment and educational program delivery. However, budget restrictions have required the college to "do more with less," complicating program administration and compromising policies and curricula. This document describes the comparative assessment of programs process and its results at MCC. Highlights include: (1) overall campus ratings reflect characteristics consistent with significant growth; (2) vocational/technical programs are well-enrolled, but there is a need for larger capacity in some classes; (3) liberal arts courses are heavily enrolled and in high demand, so much so that the writing-intensive courses in areas where small numbers of courses are offered may artificially and unfairly lower the overall averages; (4) the volume of student-related increases and resulting growth in lecturer-taught classes have affected all non-instructional programs (i.e. technical support staff are overloaded); and (5) Student Services program outcomes ratings are comparatively lower than most other non-instructional ratings, including Financial Aid and Admissions. This document discusses each type of program, its assessment, and recommendations for action and improvement. (EMH)

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A Comparative Assessment of Programs
Maui Community College

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A COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAMS
MAUI COMMUNITY COLLEGE

CONTEXT:

A comparative assessment of Maui Community College's programs occurs within the context of six years of enrollment increases. Since Fall 1987, when the College's enrollment stood at 1,915 students, the student population has grown to 2,688 in Fall of 1992, an increase of 40 percent. In fact, the Fall 1992 opening enrollment rose to a high of 2,799 students before dropping back to 2,688 as result of students' inability to register for their priority course choices. The College's FTE grew from 1,030 to 1,394 in the same period, reflecting an increase of 35 percent. These increases represent student and community interest in higher education on all three islands in Maui County. This growth additionally resulted from the College's aggressive approach to recruitment and delivering educational programs throughout our community college service area.

During this period of student growth, restrictions imposed upon community college budgets including MCC's complicated the College's objective of improving the quality of student learning and fulfilling its overall institutional mission. The initial budget restriction of 6.9 percent ($561,475) this past year presented additional challenges which required drastic responses including reducing Instructional Supplies budget by 20 percent, totally reallocating the Instructional Equipment budget to support lecturer taught classes, shortening the student help hours of support for the library, business lab, computer lab, and learning lab by 35 percent, and decreasing the library book budget by 34 percent. For the past two years, specific assistance from the Chancellor's office was additionally essential to meeting the College's apprenticeship demands. Programmatic assessments while driven by the empirical and available data have also, therefore, considered the recent fiscal challenges of improving programs and services with less resources per student.

In sum, the recent environment within which the Comparative Assessment was undertaken is continuing to require that the College do more with less. What appear to be high levels of efficiencies in many of the College's programs and services actually obscure the serious qualitative challenges to improve student learning at MCC with aging equipment, fewer hours of support services, and generally fewer books, instructional supplies, and other resources.

ASSUMPTIONS:

In responding to the Comparative Assessment Process, the College embarked on an approach based on the following assumptions:

1. That using uniformly available empirical Maui Community College data would permit and promote more consistent and comparative analyses

2a. That encouraging the use of "other factors," however relevant, might tend to disproportionately skew program ratings:

To retain the empirical methodology, the College adopted the position of precluding the consideration of "other factors (See Appendix 1)." The concern about including such factors as limited space, the need for personal help in small groups, and lack of adequate levels of equipment was that these factors might

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minimize the value of common criteria, exaggerate the positive impact of whatever "factor" suggested, skew the ratings to much higher averages, and finally create more confusion than clarification of comparative program performance.

2b. That program narratives (See Appendix 2)would balance any significant distortions of program demand and performance by including such program-specific information such as facilities limitations (e.g., ABRP, AMT, WELD), mandated limits (NURS) to class size, staffing impact (single faculty programs), graduation rates (are lower in certain programs because of students leave the program early or are already employed in the field and need skills upgrading), etc.

3. That the "Master Plan" major goals for the University of Hawai`i continue to guide our definitions for Centrality (pages 38-39 relate specifically to MCC):

"A. Striving for excellence in undergraduate education"

"C. Revitalizing service to the State"

"E. Maintaining diversity by clarifying missions and coordinating campus plans"

"F. Expanding access to educational opportunity throughout the State"

"G. Improving the organization, financing and image of the University"

4. That the mission of Maui Community College will remain largely unchanged in being charged to provide the entire tri-isle County of Maui with the best possible quality of postsecondary education

5. That the goals and priorities of MCC's Academic Development Plan 1990-96 support the UH Master Plan and also should guide the Centrality range and ratings

6. That the ratings of the programs can be sufficiently differentiated to contribute to proposing actions for program improvements that will be more critical or urgent depending upon the comparative performance of any particular program with other College programs

7. That specific actions related to program decisions and improvements would incorporate "program review," "program health indicators," and other relevant information and conform to the directions of the MCC 1990-96 Academic Development Plan

8. That should the instructional program need to be reduced, there should also be a related contraction of support services

Methodology:

The process and schedule of MCC's Institutional Review is

described in Appendix 1. A part of the plan included inviting a separate "faculty group" from the groups (Executive Committee [Provost, Deans, Directors, Assistant Dean, Faculty Senate Chair, ASMCC representative, APT representative, Clerical/Operations & Maintenance representative, EEO/AA Coordinator, Schedule of Courses Coordinator, Master Plan/CIP Coordinator], Division Chairs/Counterparts [Registrar, Fiscal Officer, Apprenticeship Coordinator, etc.], and Program Coordinators), that were actively involved in the data corrections and analyses. This alternative "faculty group" provided its analyses through the Faculty Senate Chair. This alternate group represented faculty from the six divisions who were encouraged to independently assess the data. This alternative track permitted the College to consider other perspectives and incorporate them into the final analysis.

The criteria selected to represent "demand," "efficiency," and "outcome" were extensively discussed. As the UH Master Plan and MCC's Academic Development Plan prominently identify "educational access" and "outreach" to all areas of the State as a part of the University and MCC missions, the rating range for "centrality" was incorporated into the range for "demand."

For example, the relatively higher ratings (8 through 10) for demand in Table 1a (Vocational/Technical) and 1b (Liberal Arts), Number of Classes, represent an acknowledgment that MCC offers the only postsecondary programs and services in Maui County.

Wherever comparisons were possible among liberal arts and vocational/technical data, the ratings integrated the program and discipline data into one scale. For example, "SSH PER FTE FACULTY" begins with a "5" rating for Cooperative Education on the Vocational Education Programs list at "41.43 (See Table 2a)" then is followed by a rating of "6" for Social Sciences on the Liberal Arts Discipline list at "68.57 (See Table 2b)" on the same scale. The "5 to 10" scale was adopted after considerable discussion and subsequent agreement on the following characteristics of this range:

- The fact that MCC and its respective programs offer the only higher education opportunities for students and residents of the County of Maui
- An acknowledgment that MCC has been one of the fastest growing institutions in the UH System. . .34% over the last four years
- A recognition that serving a tri-isle rural community with a comprehensive two-year community college curriculum will necessitate offering an array of courses within the liberal arts and technical curricula
- An acceptance that budgetary constraints and the economies of scale of a small/rural institution will limit course offerings in many areas but should not necessarily penalize disciplines or programs for the number of classes in any particular program or discipline
- An endorsement of the College's mission that serving a tri-isle community with an effort to equalize educational opportunities will entail somewhat higher

costs

This procedure was also followed for the following criteria in both Vocational Education Programs and Liberal Arts Disciplines: "SSH," "AVERAGE CLASS SIZE," "% SMALL CLASSES," "% CLASS FIT," "COST PER SSH," and "CREDITS EARNED RATIO."

Note: Some ratings in the liberal arts, for example chemistry, geography and oceanography reflect the fact that the College chose to analyze costs of programs by account codes. That fact caused disciplines such as these to be rated lower than they might otherwise have been. If this exercise is repeated, the college would place chemistry and oceanography with physical science and geography with social science.

ANALYSIS:

The overall campus ratings reflect characteristics consistent with significant growth especially within the last four years. MCC faculty have accommodated growing numbers of students beyond class limits as resources have limited the number of courses and classes. These phenomena directly coincide with the data indicating generally high demand and efficiency.

The responses to the process have also generally been constructive. There appears to be general recognition that more information about program performance is clearly important and must be more easily and systematically retrievable. Specifically, more details regarding outcomes for all academic, vocational/technical, and non-instructional programs should include such data as employment placement for vocational/technical programs, transfer rates to UH Manoa and other baccalaureate programs on Maui and in Honolulu and Hilo, student satisfaction with library and student services, etc.

Vocational/Technical

MCC currently offers Certificates of Completion in eleven areas, Certificates of Achievement in sixteen areas, and Associate in Sciences Degrees in thirteen fields. The vocational/technical programs are organized in the areas of agriculture (Agricultural Careers), business (Accounting, Business Careers, and Office Administration and Technology), hospitality industry (Food Services and Hotel Operations), health (Nursing Career Ladder and Human Services), public service (Administration of Justice), and technologies (Auto Body Repair and Painting, Automotive Technology, Building Maintenance, Carpentry, Drafting Technology, Fashion Technology, and Welding). Table 3 presents the data related to the Vocational/Technical programs.

- Most of MCC's vocational/technical programs including the Accounting, Automotive Technology, Business Career, Fashion Technology, Food Services, Hotel Operations, Human Services, Nursing, and Office Administration and Technology programs are well-enrolled. The Food Services and Nursing programs have additionally demonstrated exceptionally and perennially high retention and graduation rates.

- In comparing the data among the academic programs and

disciplines, the limitations of "shops" in the ABRP, AMT, CARP, FASH TECH, MAIN, and WELD programs to safely accommodate larger numbers of students were noted. Even those programs and disciplines at the lower end of the continuum indicate strong student interest. In such areas as Building Maintenance where few have graduated, the demand for skills upgrading and training within growing tourism and building infrastructure on Maui has resulted in credible class sizes.

- In the Cooperative Education Program, changes in personnel have interrupted the number of students served in the last year. However, enrollments are anticipated to increase substantially in the next year as the staffing has stabilized.

- Enrollments and outcomes in the Moloka`i Agriculture Program present serious challenges that demand more immediate actions and solutions. Indications on Moloka`i are that the Moloka`i Ranch is planning to embark upon a significant diversified agricultural initiative. Should this development fail to materialize, the College must consider reducing the scope of the MCC Moloka`i Agriculture Farm component of its Agricultural Careers program.

- In analyzing those programs and disciplines that show comparatively lower averages, these averages are nonetheless very viable. In the vocational/technical area, the Auto Body Repair, Building Maintenance, and Carpentry programs all experienced growth since the previous year. Like some of the other programs, these three programs are led and primarily taught by the same faculty member. While innovations have been made to offer a wide array of courses within these programs through modularized approaches, individualized instruction is not a panacea but an approach with trade-offs. In exchange for offering a wide range of courses by a single faculty to a student group with highly diversified skills, some students clearly require alternative learning modes to individualized instruction.

- In the OAT program, a re-examination of its relationship and interface with the computer technology appears to be appropriate. Keyboarding courses should be considered as possible pre-requisites for OAT enrollment.

Actions:

Future iterations of this exercise should clearly include program, discipline, and service outcome indicators that would better represent the programs' general effectiveness. Such data from Program Health indicators, if consistently retrieved for all programs, would improve the base of information being analyzed to determine program performance. Some of the planned actions will include:

- Implementing the "program health indicators" to establish program targets as well as to improve program performance should be considered.

- Program specific plans will be developed for those which indicate comparative performance difficulties; and all

programs will design activities to achieve appropriate targets. These plans should consider stimulating relationships with each relevant program advisory committee; and coordinating marketing, recruitment, academic advisement, counseling, and placement efforts.

- A plan to coordinate credit programs especially in the business-related fields and noncredit initiatives with Community Services programs including Business and Industry Development Services and the Visitor Industry Training and Education Center will be developed to minimize areas of duplication and maximize areas of cross-fertilization and mutual support. Employment Training Center, State Employment Services, and JOBS programs will also be reviewed for improving coordination and avoiding duplicative activities.

- Should budgetary constraints require downsizing of the higher education enterprise on Maui, courses and programs whose needs were comparatively less critical would need to be further examined based on:

  - Employment Demand Prospects

  - Student Enrollments/Demand

  - Program personnel and other costs

  The following areas would be examined:

  - Agriculture Program on Moloka`i

  - Drafting

  - Overall reduction of elective courses for vocational/ technical and liberal arts programs based on information based on student demand and employment prospects

- To prepare Maui County students for opportunities at the Maui National High Performance Computing Center, the development of computer and electronics technological curricula should be investigated immediately.

- SCANS, Tech-Prep and "Two + Two" cooperative initiatives with the Department of Education will be continued and is expected to strengthen MCC's vocational/technical programs.

Liberal Arts

The Liberal Arts enrollments have grown from 617 students in Fall 1988 to 875 in Fall 1992 representing an increase of 42 percent. This growth can be attributed to the availability of expanding baccalaureate and graduate degree options offered through the Maui Outreach Program. Additionally, the data behind the Comparative Assessment including the Fall 1991 Academic Crossover Study reflects about 60 percent of the courses selected by 901 unclassified students were in the Liberal Arts curriculum. Closer analysis revealed that a significant portion of this unclassified group were actually in pre-business, pre-nursing, or some other pre-professional field. These majors have been approved for addition to MCC

student applicants since Spring of 1993 and should clarify future distributions between liberal arts-related majors and truly unclassified students. See summary of Liberal Arts data displayed on Table 4.

- Generally, the liberal arts courses are heavily enrolled. In many cases, faculty members have cooperated in accepting more students than the maximum class size to accommodate student interest in a period of limited resources.

- The analysis focused on criteria selected to represent "demand," "efficiency," and "outcome." MCC's limited resources require scheduling an array of courses which address students' needs to access liberal arts distribution requirements (to meet a minimum of 3 courses each in humanities, social science, and science disciplines). For a campus of about 2,700 students, there are often one, two, or three courses offered per discipline. The process applies a methodology that may unfairly penalize the comparisons of disciplines with fewer courses such as Journalism, Drama, Humanities, and Social Sciences with other disciplines which offer a greater variety of courses. In the latter case, disciplines with more courses have tended to draw larger numbers of students through offering more extensive opportunities for students to develop their interests.

- Among the liberal arts courses, the writing intensive courses for areas where small numbers of courses are offered may artificially and unfairly lower the overall averages. In other cases class sizes which affect other "demand" factors, are limited by the limitations of the physical size of the classroom.

Actions:

- While not clearly reflected in the program data, the significant number of unclassified students may affect the number of majors in the Technical and Liberal Arts programs. Pre-majors in nursing and other high demand programs are being developed as alternatives to unclassified designations; unclassified students will also be contacted to clarify their educational objectives.

- Coordination between the Maui Outreach Program and MCC per the newly established Outreach Policy should begin to improve the course scheduling for Liberal Arts courses to enable higher numbers of transfers and potentially Liberal Arts graduates.

- Increased level of faculty involvement with liberal arts majors and more direct support from Student Services should be considered.

- To provide MCC students with expanded baccalaureate alternatives, satellite-delivered bachelors degree programs should be explored.

Non-Instructional Programs

The general arena of academic, student, and institutional support and management appear to very substantial given the

number of clientele served, activities performed, and complexity of services being provided. In the some of the areas like the business office and academic support which reflect comparatively higher averages, these higher numbers are more representative of personnel inadequacies than extraordinary levels of efficiency. What clearly appears to be the case on a campus that has grown 34 percent in the last four years is that our infrastructure cannot continue to provide quality education at the present rate of enrollment growth. See Non-Instructional program data on Table 5.

- Generally, clerical, technical, and administrative support are highly leveraged in performing tasks related to Institutional Support, Academic Support, and Community Services. The volume of student-related increases and resulting growth in lecturer-taught classes have affected all non-instructional programs. For example, over 740 students were enrolled in either Channel 12, SkyBridge, or HITS classes in the Spring 1992 semester. Technical staff are assigned to several television delivery systems simultaneously and student help and sometimes students themselves have been asked to operate the SkyBridge equipment due to resource limits.

- Due to the high number of noncredit participants served by the Community Services program with a relatively smaller proportion of State general-funded positions, the ratings for this program were comparatively higher.

- The Student Services program outcome ratings were comparatively lower than most other non-instructional ratings. Reductions in an already lean budget through "turn-over" savings requirements and budget restrictions resulted in lower levels of overall student help services for financial aid, student activities, admissions and records, and other areas.

Actions:

A better balance will be sought to acquire support positions in the media center, computer center, business office, and in the outreach centers so that future instructional growth may be properly served. Additionally, data related to outcomes were obviously scarce or deficient. All of the academic, technical, and other programs of the College were generally discouraged in developing "other factors."

- Efficiencies in Student Services are currently being addressed through the development of a plan to reorganize this program to improve student achievement.

- Student or Staff Satisfaction feedback should be considered for all non-instructional programs serving students or faculty. The Library, Student Services, the Media Center, and other programs are implementing survey instruments. The Deans, Directors, and Provost's offices are regularly provided with survey information from the Faculty Senate, Division Chairs, and other staff who serve in the respective areas.

- The business office activities have also been complicated by the level of external funding that the College has

sought to continue to improve its programs and services. The College's extramural funding amounted to more than $1.3 million last year and is expected to exceed $1.8 million for the 1993-94 year.

Appendix 1

OTHER FACTORS

"Other Factors" should generally relate to all programs. Some of the suggested "Other Factors" are listed below:

Program Demand/Centrality

- Relevance to and priority for UH Master Plan, e.g., access emphasis, "only higher ed institution" in the County, etc.
- Relevance to and priority for MCC Academic Development Plan
- Requirements of Accreditation Standards

Program Efficiency

- $ Cost/Average number of CA/AS degree grads/year over the past five years
- $ Cost/number of CA/AS degree grads projected for Spring 1993
- Limitations of Facilities
- Impact and limitations of One-person programs
- Program Review recommendations

Program Outcomes

- Number of program majors placed in field-related employment
- Program Health Indicators

Appendix 2

PROCESS FOR CONDUCTING THE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

PHASE I - INITIAL REVIEW BY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, PROGRAM COORDINATORS, AND DIVISION CHAIRS/COUNTERPARTS
February 3 - 12

A. REVIEW DATA FOR ACCURACY AND REVISE WHERE NECESSARY

B. COMPLETE COLLECTION OF OTHER MISSING DATA WHERE NEEDED

C. DEVELOP AND DISCUSS OTHER FACTORS

D. BEGIN WRITING NARRATIVES TO DESCRIBE SPECIFICS RELATED TO EACH PROGRAM/DISCIPLINE'S PERFORMANCE

PHASE II

February 16 - 19

A. DRAFT OF CATEGORIZED DATA BY DEVELOPED BY DEANS/DIRECTORS/PROVOST AND PRESENTATION TO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (and Special Faculty Group)

B. FEEDBACK ON CATEGORIZED DATA DRAFT FROM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE USED TO REFINE CATEGORIES

C. DISTRIBUTE DATA TO PROGRAMS/DISCIPLINES (EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, PROGRAM COORDINATORS, AND DIVISION CHAIRS/COUNTERPARTS) FOR REVIEW AND FEEDBACK (and Special Faculty Group)

D. REFINE "OTHER FACTORS"

E. COLLEGE-WIDE DISCUSSION (February 17)

F. REVISE/REFINE IN RESPONSE TO DISCUSSION

PHASE III

February 22 - 26

A. FINALIZE DATA, RANK PROGRAMS/DISCIPLINES

B. FINALIZE NARRATIVES

C. DISTRIBUTE FINAL DRAFT AND ANALYSES

D. COLLEGE-WIDE DISCUSSION (February 24)

E. SUBMIT PRELIMINARY REPORT TO CHANCELLOR

PHASE IV

March 1 - 5

A. FINAL REVISIONS

B. SUBMISSION TO CHANCELLOR

Appendix 3

Program Narratives and Data

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